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Stenographer's Report

of the

Seligman

vs.

Watson

Debate



MARX-ENGELS INSTITUTE

DEBATE

*“Is the failure of socialism, as evinced
by the recent partial return to capitalism,
due to the fallacies of Marxian theory?”*

AFFIRMATIVE:

Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman

Head of Department of Political Economics, Columbia University

NEGATIVE:

Harry Waton

Marxian Writer, Lecturer and Teacher
Educational Director of Marx-Engels Institute

CLARE SHERIDAN
CHAIRMAN

HELD AT THE
MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE
NEW YORK CITY

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, APRIL 30th, 1922

MARX-ENGELS INSTITUTE
15 SPRUCE STREET, NEW YORK

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
FOREWORD	7
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN, CLARE SHERIDAN	15
OPENING PRESENTATION OF THE AFFIRMATIVE, PRO- FESSOR EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN.....	19
OPENING PRESENTATION OF THE NEGATIVE, HARRY WATON	33
REBUTTAL OF THE AFFIRMATIVE, PROFESSOR EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN	49
REBUTTAL OF THE NEGATIVE, HARRY WATON.....	53
SURREBUTTAL OF THE AFFIRMATIVE, PROFESSOR EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN.....	60

FOREWORD

The Russian Revolution—what a colossal event, what a great historic reality! By its nature, its extent and its effect upon the human race, it eclipses all other historic events. Its greatness showed itself in its successful resistance of the universal attempt of the ruling class to destroy it. It manifested itself in most illuminating light at the Genoa conference. There it showed to the whole world that the proletariat of Russia, which was placed into power and into possession of Russia by the Russian revolution, is the only real power in the world.

But the Russian revolution is only the beginning of the historic proletarian revolution. It is Marxism in action. To understand the character of the Russian revolution, its historic significance, and its relation to the international proletarian revolution, we must understand Marxism. A knowledge of Marxism is even more essential to know what steps the international proletariat should now take, and to know how to direct its future struggles against the present order of society. Never before, therefore, was a knowledge and understanding of Marxism so essential. Never before were such knowledge and understanding so accessible to the masses, as they can now see it in action, see its achievements and results.

The Marx-Engels Institute—the Marx Institute reorganized as the Marx-Engels Institute—has always realized the value and importance of Marxism for the international proletariat; and for more than twelve years it has most persistently, and in the face of almost universal opposition and overwhelming difficulties, endeavored to spread among the masses a knowledge and under-

standing of Marxism. This it did through regular study classes, lectures, debates, and the publication of books and periodicals.

The first chapter of the Russian revolution was about coming to an end, culminating in the Genoa conference. Events were all pointing to the eventual triumph of the Russian proletariat; and while the Powers of the world were making preparations for the Genoa conference, the Marx-Engels Institute felt that this was the most opportune time for a fundamental public discussion of the merits of Marxism in the light of the achievements of the Russian revolution, and this could be brought out best through a debate between competent representatives of Marxism, on the one hand, and Capitalism, on the other hand. As the Genoa conference was progressing, making it ever more and more clear that the Russian proletariat is the real master of the situation, the interest of the masses in the Russian position and the doctrines of Marxism grew ever more and more. And under this favorable opportunity the debate took place between Professor Seligman and Harry Waton.

The debate was a phenomenal success. It took place in the presence of a large and cultured gathering on the 30th of April, 1922, at the Manhattan Opera House, in New York City. The time was opportune, the debaters were most competent, and on this occasion were at their best. The audience responded most readily to the spirit of the debate, and rose to the heights of the presentation of the subject on either side. We feel sure in saying that they will forever feel grateful to us for the opportunity afforded them to partake in such an intellectual feast.

The Marx-Engels Institute spared neither means nor effort to make this debate a phenomenal success, and a phenomenal success it was indeed. The ideas presented and the thoughts communicated and the theories developed at this debate will for a long time remain a monumental contribution to the knowledge and the understanding of Marxism and of the Russian revolution. Realizing that the crystallized results of this great effort would be of lasting value to the thoughtful and the studious, the Marx-

Engels Institute caused the debate to be taken down by a stenographer, so as to be able to publish it, thus affording opportunity to the tens of thousands to read it, study it, and reflect on it. It is this monumental debate that we herewith present to the reading public.

Now a few remarks about the participants of the debate. Clare Sheridan, the English sculptress who is best known for making the busts of the leaders of the Russian revolution, acted as chairman. Little else is known about her in America. Her experience and report of Russia proved her to be one of the many, throughout the world, who see in Russia's experience a great historic event, but, being little acquainted with the philosophy of Socialism, are inspired but unconvinced. Prior to her trip into Russia she knew nothing of the truth of Socialism. Brought up in comfort and culture, she soon found herself established as most people of her class.

The war broke out, and her husband, who became a captain in the English army, was killed. For the first time in her life she faced the problem of providing for herself and her two children. She had talent in sculpture work which she discovered some time before. She now thought of this talent and decided to develop it. She progressed rapidly and in a very short time won recognition as a great artist. She made the busts of such men as Marconi, Asquith, Churchill and many others.

Two years ago, when Krassin was in England on a mission from Russia, he urged her to go to Russia and make the busts of the Russian leaders.

Her experience there proved to be the greatest event of her life. Her desire to tell the world of it all brought her name before the American public. The situation in which she finds herself now made her truly fit as a chairman of such a debate.

Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman, head of the department of political economy of Columbia University and president of the Ethical Culture Society in New York, is one of the foremost

American men of political science. He has acquired an education in America and Europe vouchsafed to but few. He devoted more than forty years to the study of all phases of political science and has gained an international reputation. He is recognized as one of the great authorities, and his works on political economy are used as text-books in many colleges. His library is hardly equalled anywhere. It contains no less than thirty thousand volumes covering every school of political science—books written in the original language as well as translations. His studies included Marxian economics which enabled him to debate the question of Socialism from a much higher standard than that of most opponents to Socialism.

These facts make him the outstanding figure to uphold his side of the debate.

Harry Waton is the educational director of the Marx-Engels Institute. This organization has for its purpose the carrying on of classes in economics, psychology, philosophy and history in their relation to human progress. The founder, Harry Waton, has made it his life purpose to master the works of the greatest master minds, past and present, and to bring this knowledge to the working class. For more than twenty-eight years he has been connected with the revolutionary movement of the workers. During these years he taught thousands, who were eager to learn, the great truths of Marx, Kant, Spinoza and many others, enabling them to acquire a comprehensive and progressive view of life and history. Many of his students went to other countries spreading the teachings of Marx the understanding of which but few Socialists could boast.

The many who came drank from that inexhaustible fountain of knowledge and spiritual strength. By his example of devotion for the cause of Socialism and by his persistence he inspired many to follow his noble example. There are many of his students who teach, write and lecture on Socialism and kindred subjects. His thorough understanding of the works of Marx, through study and teaching, enabled him to comprehend and

interpret the Russian revolution from the viewpoint of that great mind. All this enabled him to handle the subject under debate in a masterly way.

To the thousands who read this booklet we have a word to say. If you are an opponent of, a sympathizer for, or an enthusiast about Socialism—it is in your interest to have a thorough knowledge of this subject. There is only one correct way to acquire this knowledge—go to the works of the founder of Scientific Socialism—Marx. To understand these works you may need aid. This institute is ready to give such aid.

In addition to our many activities in and near New York City we have found need for some means to reach the serious-minded and studious who are scattered throughout the world and who are interested in our work. We take this opportunity to announce the resumption this fall of the publication of "The Marxian."

As the name of this magazine implies, its primary purpose will be to spread among the working class a deep, fundamental and comprehensive knowledge of Socialism as understood and taught by Marx. In the universe light is latent everywhere, yet it requires a sun to manifest that light on a great scale. Likewise, in society light is latent everywhere, yet it requires a Marx to manifest that light on a great scale. The class struggle assumed historic significance, and the course of social evolution became apparent, and the working class came into ever greater power, only then when Marx shed the light of a master mind on the inner mechanism of social life. And it is this light which the working class need in their onward march towards their historic goal. It is the aim of "The Marxian" to foster in the working class a desire and to cultivate in them a capacity to seek after such knowledge and to understand it thoroughly, so that the members of the working class should not need to look into the mouth of self-styled Marxists or reputed leaders in the Socialist movement for light and knowledge, as they were compelled to do until now. It will be the aim of this magazine to make the members of the working class competent enough to read and understand

the truths and the principles of Socialism and to judge of them in the light of our greater master minds.

And for this purpose, this magazine will continue with the next issue a series of articles or studies under the heading, "An Aid to the Study of 'Capital'." In this series of articles the monumental work of Marx will be taught, explained and illustrated, beginning with the first and ending with the last of the volumes of this work. This will be a work of years, but, indeed, it is a work for years. The reader of this magazine is at once invited to join this study class, procure the works of Marx, and begin with the next issue and continue through the years.

That this important work should be carried on in a vigorous and interesting manner, so as to bring to the reader the maximum of profit, the readers will constitute themselves a sort of study class and coöperate with one another. And we from our side will endeavor to the best of our abilities to help them understand this monumental work in all its fulness, difficulty and sublimity.

In addition to the study of Marx's "Capital," this magazine will also open a department for the study of other Socialist classics as well as for the study of other classics.

Further, this magazine shall comment on Current Events, review books of importance, and shall produce original work of our students and readers.

To those who wish to begin their study of Marx's works now, we call attention to the book quoted in the debate: "The Philosophy of Marx," by Harry Waton.

We invite all those interested in our work to write us.

MARX-ENGELS INSTITUTE.

Seligman

vs.

Watson

Debate

CLARE SHERIDAN:

MY FRIENDS:—It is my privilege to introduce to you Professor Seligman, professor of political science and economics of Columbia University, and Mr. Harry Waton of the Marx-Engels Institute, both of them well known to you.

It seems to me presumptuous that I, a foreigner, should introduce to you your own distinguished shining lights; but I was asked to do so, and being a woman, my vanity was touched and I fell for it. But it seems to me there must be millions of people better fitted to take my place.

I don't know why this honor was done to me; it certainly wasn't on account of my knowledge of economics. I know a little about a few things, but I know nothing of economics. My father, Moreton Frewen, wrote a book many years ago called "The Economic Crisis," and he has talked to me about bi-metallism ever since I can remember and today he still sends me pamphlets on the Silver Question. He says, if the world had done as he recommended it would be a better world today.

Well, "the economic crisis" of which he wrote seems to me still in the ascendent. I am glad he isn't here to hear me say that I haven't read his treatises on silver to find out what it is about! Nor have I read Marx because a Marxian told me if I did I wouldn't understand it. So, discouraged at the start, I didn't begin.

It seems to me that the only reason for my being asked to be Chairman of this historic meeting is just the fact that I went into Russia at a moment when Russia, so to speak, was not open to the public, and I came out deeply interested. Lots of other people did that too. Some were more impressed than others. But, they didn't most of them, start from a sheltered conservative nursery.

My reaction to Russia was on the whole emotional and artistic. The artist in me (and you must accept me as such because that's all that I am) appreciated the artist in them.

Before I go any further I just want to take you into my confidence. I can't talk unless I have an understanding with

my audience. On this solemn occasion I feel as though I was in church and those who asked me to be Chairman knew quite well my ignorance and that I couldn't possibly say anything serious and relevant to the occasion, so on their own heads be it.

They also told me that I have got to speak for twenty minutes, but owing to the chaos ensuing from the daylight saving time change which began today I think that I may cut short my speech. I feel I have no right to take up precious time which is so needed for the contest, but it seems to me that I must say something vaguely that has to do with the present debate and of course Russia is the great figure looming in our background.

Incidentally, this is the very, very last time that I am ever going to speak in public, as I don't like it! and so, I am going to take this occasion to tell you why I was impressed by Russia. I will say it quite shortly but I must also explain what led to that state of mind.

I spent some years before the war living a conventional traditional life in England which was perfectly unproductive and perfectly futile. In fact, I endured unendurable boredom. People don't attribute enough importance to boredom. Boredom has often driven people to drink, to suicide and also to extremes of vice and even to murder. Nobody except those who have been through it know the anguish of boredom. I didn't rebel against it. I didn't know there was any other life to live. I thought everybody was bored and I divided them into two kinds, people who like me were conscious of their boredom and others, luckier ones, who were not. Then came the War.

People were no longer bored; they were heartbroken, and I assure you that a broken heart is more endurable than boredom. The War affected a great many people very much as the Russian revolution did. It forced some people to work who never had worked before and I was one of those. The War taught me the healing value of work. Then came to me this wonderful opportunity of going into Russia. And such was the frame of mind in which I was prepared for Russia.

When I got there suddenly I was conscious of the great spirit of reconstruction. The Russia that I saw seemed to me like a gigantic piece of sculpture; it was something modern, vital, strong, being hewn as it were out of a mountain of rock.

I didn't ask if it was practical; I didn't go around looking

for small faults of detail and I didn't try to criticize the technique. I just bowed reverently before something which seemed to me a gigantic piece of modern realism.

Here were people, cultured people, starving people, a crushed and weary people working at something in spite of everything, working on something that was experimental, with no precedent to guide them, making mistakes and never losing courage, scoffed at by those who stood aloof and yet never losing belief.

That was my reaction to Russia. It is something that can be felt rather than explained.

Your American writer who is dead, Stephen Crane, wrote a little love poem and in three lines he expressed what I feel about Russia. He said:

My love is a temple,
And in that temple is an altar,
And on that altar is my heart.

And I think that represents very much what Russia is to a great many people. It is a temple, and it has an altar, an altar of sacrifice, on which those who love her lay their hearts. Russia I love as I should love somebody who had brought everything worth while into my life.

Forgive me for intruding love into this economic debate. Love has no place here and I have no right to go on taking precious time from the contest. I have no part in this. I am only a perfectly good bridge between two opposing factions, but I am content to be a bridge. What we want are more bridges. Bridges between nation and nation and between class and class, and between extreme thought and extremest thought.

Every time we get together and discuss this thing amicably, there is another bridge built. When Kings and Bolsheviks lunch together another bridge is built. This doesn't mean that the King is moved nor that the Bolshevik is convinced, but it does mean that there is a greater chance of peace and more understanding.

This afternoon the Professor is not going to convince Mr. Waton, and Mr. Waton is not going to move the Professor, but I dare say there are many among you here, like me, who

are ready to be convinced, and so, go to it. Fight it out and hit hard, but as sportsmen who want to win a game, hit without bitterness. Good luck to both of you. (Applause.)

Prof. Seligman is going to fight for fifty minutes; Mr. Waton will then fight for fifty minutes. Then they will return to it, the Professor for twenty minutes and Mr. Waton for twenty-five minutes. I hope they will keep within the scheduled time. The Professor will have the great good luck of having the last word. He will speak for the last ten minutes.

Professor Seligman will now have fifty minutes for the affirmative.

PROFESSOR SELIGMAN: (Applause.)

MADAM CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

I have been urged to begin with a fight. But I shall do my best to enter as a gentle and sucking dove trying to put you in a good humor, if I can, and in a mood to appreciate some of the ideas which appear to me to be important. The fight, if the fight comes, will show itself a little later.

Now, the situation is a little embarrassing for both of us, because the topic of the debate reads, as you know: Resolved that the failure of Socialism in Russia, as evinced by the partial return to capitalism, discloses the fallacies of the Marxian theory. You see, there are three points in that statement.

The first is, *Socialism has failed*. That is taken for granted, although it may not appeal to the other side. But it will perhaps have to be explained in a few words. How has Socialism failed?

In the second place, the statement goes on to say, "*as evinced by the partial return to capitalism*." What, exactly, does that partial return mean? How partial is it? How complete is it?

And finally the last point, that *it shows the fallacies of the Marxian theory*. Here again we must ask, what is the Marxian theory, and what are the fallacies if there be fallacies?

So you see, Ladies and Gentlemen, *there are three points which it is incumbent on me to explain at the very beginning*.

Now, before proceeding to that explanation I want to say a word about my appreciation, and that of every scholar, not only of the good work, the admirable work that has been done along some lines by that mighty thinker, Karl Marx, but also about my appreciation of the efforts of those whole-souled, devoted protagonists of the new order in Russia, who, however we may criticise them here or there for what they have done or left undone, have nevertheless succeeded in accomplishing some very remarkable results, even if not in the economic sphere.

I take all of that for granted, however, because I assume that the large majority of my audience today is composed of those who know and appreciate full well most of what has been achieved. Therefore, I go on at once to the first point in my exposition.

What has been the failure of Socialism in Europe, in Russia? Now, of course, you can't explain what the failure has been unless you understand what it is that they have attempted to accomplish and then in what respects they have failed to achieve it.

As I look upon it, *there are five points in the program of Marx* accepted by the present leaders of Russia which picture, as it were, the ideal to be achieved. What are those five points which have been attempted?

The first is what you might call the *complete socialization of all economic effort*, of all production and of all consumption. Marx, as we know, looked forward to the time when the revolution having once been accomplished, there would be a complete socialization, first—I don't mean first in time—but first in order, of agriculture, then of industry, and then of commerce and trade. That means that all the private machinery of production, land, implements of agriculture, stock in trade, factories, machines and the whole complicated organism of commerce and trade should be taken out of the hands of individuals who utilize it for private profit and put into the hands of the group, whether small groups working in harmony with each other, or ultimately the large group, the State, the whole national organization.

That was the first idea, socialization, disappearance of private property in all the means of production, and a method of distribution of wealth which would be maintained and developed by this communal social spirit.

The second point is a corollary of the first; that *all private trade should disappear*, that with the victory of the proletariat or the real working class, the bourgeoisie in the sense of the smaller property owners and of the larger capitalists, would go, and with the disappearance of trade, of commerce, of private commerce and of the bourgeoisie speculation would of course also disappear.

The third point, naturally, would follow, that as a consequence of these two phenomena *money would no longer be needed*, because since there would be no more private production and no more private products, there would not be any sale of private products. There would not be anyone who could buy those things, because there would only be the social group as a possible purchaser, and the social group would not purchase anything but would simply produce everything that was to be produced and distribute it without the intermediary of bargain and sale.

Money, therefore, would no longer act as a standard of value; money would no longer be needed and we should come to what is conceived to be a far higher and better form of transfer of labor products.

The fourth point would be a consequence of the preceding, namely that labor now being under this aegis of national production, the whole community now being composed of laborers, everyone working, there being no non-worker, no faincant, no idle recipient of interest or rent, *everyone would work equally and every one would be paid equally*. That is to say, every one would have an equal share in production, and an equal share in the enjoyment or the emoluments of production. With this equality which is one of the fundamental tenets of the Marxian theory there would also go liberty, because when all these shackles will have been stricken off the productive forces of humanity, we shall have complete equality and complete liberty.

The final conclusion, the fifth point, is that as a result of all these preceding forces, *there would be a great increase of wealth, a great increase of production, and universal prosperity*. This is clearly brought out by Marx and also by Lenin. At all events, if not a very great increase, at least a maintenance of the present production and a far more equal and ideal distribution. That means happiness, that means the reconstructed order of the future. That is the program of Marx, and the program of Lenin as contained in his book that was published just before the revolution.

Now, then, coming to the second problem, what is the result? What were the difficulties that were encountered by the statesmen in working out this great theory?

In the first place, as regards socialization, let us discuss the socialization of land. In 1918 Lenin started out with the decree which constituted the Soviet estates, where the old estates of the large land-owners were taken over and were to be worked on co-operative lines under the order of the Soviet Commissars. In addition to these Soviet estates or examples of direct central socialization all the rest of private property in land was to be socialized and production was to be carried on in common by the local group.

Almost from the very beginning, however, reluctance was observed on the part of the peasants to conform to this plan. Although the Soviet leaders attempted to bring about the so-called

“War of Classes” on the land by introducing among the small and middle peasants, the so-called proletarian peasants, the only result was to intensify the idea on the part of the great mass of the peasants—eighty-five or ninety per cent of the population of Russia—that the revolution meant to them not any socialization of land, but the getting for each peasant a little more land than he had before and getting it in a much clearer and definite way than he had before.

The whole attempt at socialization of the land broke down as had, indeed, already been warned by some of the Socialistic writers like David, ten or fifteen years ago. So that before long the government was compelled to adopt an entirely different plan.

They now recognized this invincible obstinacy on the part of the peasants. They saw that there was growing up on these confiscated estates a differentiation between the peasants, and the development of the large peasant, the able man who was getting more land gradually. The Government now, in 1919, said to the peasants, you may keep your private property but you will have to fit into our general social scheme. Therefore, you will be allowed to retain only as much as you need to support yourself and your family, and all the rest of your produce you will have to give up to us.

That was the program of confiscation of the surplus produce, the Government still maintaining the idea that the produce of the land belonged to the whole community.

What was the result of this second program? The natural result was that the peasant refused to work as long as he knew that he had to give up all of his surplus. Therefore, he produced only enough to support himself and not enough to go to the towns to support the population there. This led finally to such an immense decrease of output that in 1921, when starvation stared them in the face, the whole policy was again changed. As we shall see in a moment, this idea of making the peasant a part of the huge state-wide enterprise was completely abandoned, and with this the socialization of the land disappeared. Of the present situation I shall speak in a few minutes.

The breakdown of Socialism in the land was followed by a similar breakdown in industry. At first the theory, as I have said, that the workmen should take over the factories and that all should work and be paid equally; there was, however, such an immediate falling-off in output and such an alarming increase of

expense that it took only a few months before the first theory, that of equality of pay, was abandoned. In 1918 there were introduced one by one all the characteristics of our capitalistic regime of remuneration of labor, inequality of pay, bonuses, remuneration for overwork, penalties for non-work, and the like.

But that didn't help much. When the workmen took over the industries the managers all left, and the workmen, without any control, soldiered on their jobs, that is, instead of working, they loafed accordingly. Within a short time Trotsky, as you remember, issued his famous order: "No more equality, no more liberty; we shall now militarize all the workingmen." Every person was now compelled to work, either as a member of the Red Army or in the industrial army, of course with this militarization of labor the old ideas of liberty and equality completely disappeared.

It is true that a beautiful labor code was drawn up with the most magnificent and generous provisions, but one by one they were neglected as they had to be neglected in order to keep up even a pitiful proportion of the output.

I shan't trouble you with the figures, but in the main it may be said that in every industry, month by month, the expense increased so prodigiously and the output diminished so greatly that by 1920 there was only about four to ten per cent. and in some cases very much less than that, not more than one per cent of what it was before the revolution. What that means can well be imagined.

The militarization of labor, therefore, didn't do much good in the way of increasing the output. As the workmen now no longer were able even to get enough to keep them alive, all the usual concomitants of disorganization appeared, slackness of work, malingering, corruption in every form, even theft of every possible material, until finally the debacle became apparent. As all the old managers had been killed off or sent off, or gone off, there now ensued a veritable crisis, resulting finally in starvation with a general collapse of all industry.

That was the actual result of the effort at socialization of industry. The further consequences of course were to be expected. We come thus, in the second place, to the projected disappearance of the trader and the speculator.

Of course, under these conditions mentioned above, trade returned and speculation returned and the bourgeoisie returned.

But it was now clandestine and secret trade. It was the secret trader from whom you could buy what you wanted. And we soon witnessed all the excesses of secret speculation which were not restrained. Of the bourgeoisie I don't speak much save to mention the Sov-Bur, the new bourgeoisie of the Soviet bureaucracy. They are the ones who have had the inside track. They alone were able not only to support themselves, but to make money and become rich. The Sov-Bur is today the great phenomenon in Russia, as is the ordinary bourgeois in France, Italy and in this country. Read in Mr. Harrison's book of the champagne suppers at the homes of the Sov-Bur.

Thirdly, money instead of becoming less important, is becoming more important. At first with the idea that money was to be of no value, the government printed more and more bills. *On the first of last month there was in existence in Russia eighteen trillions of paper rubles.*

We got accustomed during the war to speak of millions and even of billions, but it remained for Russia to bring to us the conception of a trillion, a million million, and I think it was on the first of February that a *gold ruble was worth 260,000 paper rubles*. Of course you can tell exactly just how much paper a good housewife would have to carry with her in order to buy her eggs, jams and the other goods which she could always get in a certain way at those clandestine speculative shops. In fact the paper money industry in Russia is the only industry which has been prosperous. *The workmen in the State printing offices work in two shifts, twelve hours each*; it is the only industry which has really accomplished anything. That is the result of the money situation.

We come, fourthly, to liberty and equality. The equality of the workman can best be gauged by remembering the details of the report of the Italian Socialist Commission, which, on returning from Russia after examining the situation in 1920, said: "Yes, the only equality that had been attained is the equality of universal misery." That's the equality for the workingman.

As regards liberty, I need not point out the very travesty of liberty consequent upon this militarization of labor. *You had about as much liberty in industry as you have in the Army*. Labor became more and more wretched as time went on. I could read you many documents if there were time. Not alone did the day's labor become nine hours, but ten, twelve, fourteen and sixteen hours a day.

Not only do we see child labor again, but woman labor again, one by one we find pretty much all the old abuses which were found in the former system, all coming again inevitably to the fore.

And, finally, what about the reduction of output? Reduction of output was such that on the land even two or three years ago careful statisticians even in Soviet Russia warned of an impending famine. They pointed out that the least little trouble of a climatic kind would bring about a catastrophe such as had never been known before outside of China in civilized society. Their predictions were verified and the result is that you now have gotten back to the conditions of mediaeval economic life.

The population of Russia which had been above one hundred and eighty millions was reduced to one hundred and thirty millions. The population of the cities has been going down by leaps and bounds, forty-four per cent in Moscow and more in some others. Russia is gradually getting away from a condition of modern civilized society, and reverting back to the misery and the barbarism of mediaeval civilization.

Don't say that this is a result of fighting during the two or three years. Don't say that it is the result of the blockade or of the famine. I have statistics galore which I could read to you to prove that, notwithstanding all of the changes that have been made, the diminution of production in both agriculture and industry is going on at the same rate since there has been peace, since there was an opening of trade with Latvia and other countries, since all the war and all the war efforts have ceased. No, the real trouble has been the disorganization of the conditions of production and consumption that I have pointed out.

Now then, finally, what was the result? The result was realized by all the Soviet leaders themselves, that the old game was up, and that the endeavor to rely on socialism or communism in peace time was hopeless. What the country now needed was capitalism, not socialism. Thus beginning eight months ago, one after another, each element in the whole situation has been reversed.

Now what has been done? First on the land, private property has been in effect completely re-established. The peasants are allowed to produce as they like and to sell of their produce to whom ever they like, and are required only to pay just as we do in this country, a tax to the state. There is now no difference between Russia and the United States so far as ninety per cent. of the

people is concerned. Profits, private profits, private sale and private property have been re-established on the land.

In industry, what has been done? First, the effort to get foreign concessions; giving the foreign concessionaires all the powers of unitary management over the whole enterprise. Labor has no more power at all. Trotzky himself has recently written a book to show how important it is to have what he calls unitary management now. Labor in Russia has now less voice in the business than in many an American enterprise. The government says to the coming concessionaires: get as much money as you can, and make as high profits as you can, and it says this not only to the foreigner, but also within the country. First to the small bourgeois it says: introduce competition, increase output, make as much money as you can, and finally large industry also. So far as large industry is still in the hands of the State, the State is to follow the plan of purchase and sale just as the private individual. But it also says to the able engineers and managers: come and take these large industries and develop them. You saw in the papers this morning, that under the new plan proposed to the foreign countries, the new managers are to get all their property or enterprises on long leases for 99 or 999 years, just as some of our railroads got control of their former competitors by leasing them. There is no difference between the economic aspect of a long lease or private ownership. The land of England today still all belongs in theory to the king.

So that you have, one by one, every phase of private property being brought back. So in the same way with the coöperatives which were all done away with. Now an effort is being made in the case of the credit coöperatives and of the production coöperatives to bring them back. So the trade unions are being re-constituted in order to be able to fight the employers.

Thirdly the old idea that money is to be done away with has gone by the boards, like all other ideas, money is now accepted as such an invaluable measure of value that the Russian economists of the Soviet group are now devising ways and means of establishing the standard of value. But with the trillions outstanding that is an almost impossible task. Finally we have now not only private property in land, not only private property or what amounts to it in industry, we also have private property and private profits in capital and trade. We have the big state bank which now pays interest and which contracts loans. We have a

Chamber of Commerce constituted of people who do usually what they like. We have trade carried on by individuals and groups.

By all these means it is hoped that every man in Russia, and out of Russia, will be induced to increase the output by working for himself. The government says: it is wise for capitalism to be re-introduced. Then we shall learn from the capitalists how to conduct ourselves, and then the time will come when we shall be able to re-introduce Socialism, Communism and Socialization. *What a pitiful, what a childish idea,—The idea that by strengthening Capitalism you will create socialists out of capitalists!*

Ladies and Gentlemen, that is the record of what had been accomplished. In other words, one by one every one of the ideas of Marx as worked out first by Lenin and then by Trotzky, every one of them in turn has disappeared. The original communism gave way to state socialism, state socialism gave way to a modified or militarized private property, militarized private property has finally given way to frank capitalism, with rent and interest, with money and profits, with trade and speculation.

In one way or other we have, to all intents and purposes, except in name, all the worst features of modern capitalism and none of the real saving forces which are beginning to operate in some other countries that have capitalism.

Now, then, I have shown to you the breakdown, I could give you by the hour if I had time, quotations from Lenin's speeches and all modern writers. The refrain everywhere is: We have failed, we must make a retreat. But, Lenin says, one defeated man is worth two undefeated men. Therefore, let us make another retreat.

Then the question is, how many defeats will he still have to undergo before he gets a success?

We come, then, in closing to the last problem. What are the theories of Marx which have led to this situation? They are, in short, as follows:

First, there is the Marxian *theory of economic or materialistic interpretation of history*; that you must interpret all history in terms of economic facts. I haven't much to say against that. I have written a book on that subject myself, and in a certain sense there is a great deal of truth in the statement that economic facts do largely mold the framework of the society within which strife is developed. It is, however, in the first place exaggerated to think that it is only economic causes that influence the world.

Take the last war. Economic forces no doubt had something to do with it. But we know how large a role nationalist, religious and purely political forces have played. See what is going on in Ireland today and elsewhere.

It is unnecessary to point out that there are a great many other forces in addition to the economic forces that explain human actions.

But apart from that, the real weakness of the Marxian theory is the peculiar version. I object not so much to economic interpretation as to his particular brand of interpretation. The Marxian version in my opinion is a fallacy. Why so?

First, the Marxian theory of value, of profits, and of the whole substratum of modern economic life, Marx took this from Ricardo. One was the founder of individualism, the other the founder of Socialism. One a Spanish Jew and one a German Jew; two of the keenest intellects we have ever had.

Without going into the refinements of economic theory, for which this is not the place, I want to point out that the surplus value theory of profits, the theory that profits come simply through taking away from the laborer the surplus of the value that is created by him, a theory that was first formulated many years before Marx in England, that whole theory is patently fallacious, as anyone can see from looking at the facts today.

Take Mr. Ford, with whose philosophic opinions I don't always agree. *Would we say that his wealth has been due to the surplus value of the work created by his workmen?* Take McCormick of the McCormick Reaper, or Westinghouse of the Westinghouse Air Brake. Take any of those men whose inventions, whose brains have redounded to the wealth of the community because they have decreased cost. Would you say that all their profits are due to filching from labor? What would the labor have amounted to without him?

I don't deny there are many profits today which are unholy. I don't deny there are illegitimate speculative profits, that there are fraudulent commercial profits, that there is a maltreatment of labor and all that. What I do mean to say is that the fundamental theory of Marx is a fallacy. The modern theory of profits is that profits in the long run are a reward for service and that the man who invests capital, who applies the brains and who reduces costs, like Ford, or McCormick, or Westinghouse, while

he perhaps makes inordinate profits for himself, yet in the main gives more to the community than he gets from it.

The next theory of Marx was the pauperization of the workman, the theory that as society develops and capitalism grows, the workman will be pushed into a worse and worse position, till finally he will be ready for revolution because he can't make body and soul meet.

When Marx was making studies for his book in the 30's and 40's, when he was formulating his ideas, it looked very much that way, in the beginning of the factory system in England. But we know now that the facts have gone the other way. We know that there has been not alone an absolute increase of wages in all countries like England, the United States or Germany, but also a relative increase in wages.

We know there is less revolutionary spirit in England today than in the eighteenth century, and that on the whole, things are not getting worse, but are getting better. Of this I can simply state approximately, I have not time to give facts and figures. I can state only what is the accepted verdict of sound and impartial thinkers today even among the Socialists.

Take Bernstein, take the revisionists, take Tugan Bogdanovsky. They all agree that that statement of Marx and that theory must be abandoned.

Then we come to the next great theory of Marx, the theory that capitalism carries within itself its own death knell because we have these commercial riots, each one becoming more and more intense until finally there will be a collapse. *This theory of the cataclysm of society rests upon the theory of the concentration of industry; the theory, namely, that as capitalism goes on, capital will be centralized and concentrated more and more in a few hands.* That looked very plausible when Marx wrote. But Marx reckoned without his hosts.

It is true that we have a growing integration of industry as exemplified in the United States Steel and all the other Trusts. But Marx did not foresee that instead of capitalists becoming fewer and fewer, through the modern corporation which developed only since 1850, through the operation of corporate investment in capital, capital is being disseminated instead of concentrated and that there are continuously more and more competitors springing up instead of less.

Only the other day the head of the Standard Oil Trust in Indiana told me there are more competitors in oil today than there were twenty or thirty years ago.

Marx's thought has turned out not to be a fact.

So also with his theory of the cataclysm of society. Marx wrote, and it is perfectly explicable that he should write, in view of the crisis of 1818, 1835 and 1857 each of which was worse than its predecessor. It looked as if what he said would be true and that things would get worse and worse.

But the crisis of '73 wasn't much worse than that of '57. The crisis of '84 was less than that of '73 and the crisis of 1907 was still less intense in this country and really didn't amount to much abroad, and finally at the present time the present depression with all the troubles of the war, with the present unemployment situation, doesn't begin to compare in gravity with what it was in the 90's or the 70's.

What Marx did not foresee is that there are certain forces which go far to explain why crises under the modern organization of capitalist society are becoming less and less severe instead of more and more severe. You will never get a cataclysm that way.

Moreover the fallacy of the theory is in Russia itself.

According to the Marxian theory where ought the revolution to break out? *The revolution ought to break out in the country where there is the most developed and extreme form of private capitalism* as in England, United States and Germany. Yet in all of those countries there has been no revolution and there is less revolutionary spirit today than ten years ago, or fifty years ago, and nothing comparable to what it was in England a hundred years ago.

Where has it broken out? In Russia where there was no capitalism, instead of in the country where there was the most capitalism. As a result of this failure of the theory, and of the failure of the revolution to spread to others and more capitalistic countries. Lenin and Trotzky now say that we must develop a capitalism—state controlled, indeed, but still a private capitalism in Russia. *The Soviet leaders are today preaching on every platform throughout Russia, arguments and doctrines for which men were sent to the executioner or the firing squad only a few years ago.*

The very arguments that were used by the Mensheviks and the others are being used by the Bolsheviks today. Yes, indeed, we were wrong.

I still have five minutes left so that I can not explain the last point, namely, the fallacy underlying Marx's theory of the war of classes and how that has been disproved by recent events in Russia. Marx with all his ability made an inadequate analysis of movements as they were going on at that time. He reminds me for all the world of Henry George, another great thinker, another man who has done much for the world today.

Henry George worked up his theory of the Single Tax because he lived in California at a time when everything seemed to point to the aggregation of land in a few large hands—the bonanza farms. The Single Tax movement has disappeared today everywhere as anything to count with because we know that things have gone just in the opposite direction. We know now that our farms are getting to be less in size, smaller than they were, and that tenancy is not increasing in the sense it was predicted by George and the others.

So in the same way Karl Marx lived in the infancy of the capitalist system. Things were going badly in England at the time and he formulated a theory which seemed to be true in all those countries where capitalism was first introduced. But like George he failed to foresee the future.

Now, then, ladies and gentlemen, my respected antagonist must show these things in order to convince me and to win the debate. He has got to show first that the debacle and the collapse of production has been due not to the inherent tendencies of communism, but that they have been due to the war or the blockade. He must also disprove the facts which I have quoted to show that there was developing a situation of socialism which would gradually bring about the conditions of a famine, even in all those districts outside of the real famine districts itself. (Applause.)

In the next place he must take up one by one the Marxian theories. He must show that I am wrong in stating that the theory of surplus profits is a fallacy.

He must show that concentration of capital is developing apace, in refutation of my statement that there is a growing dissemination rather than concentration of capital.

He must show, in the fourth place, that crises are becoming

worse instead of becoming less severe. He must show finally that all those facts that I have mentioned about the liberty of the workmen, about the incentive on the part of the peasant, that all those alleged facts are false facts.

If my respected antagonist can do that, if, instead of keeping, as he might otherwise do, to a philosophic discussion as to the general advantages of Marxism he will come down to bed-rock and meet me on the points that I have made, one by one, then I shall be glad, indeed, to take up the issue with him.

(Applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Waton will now have fifty minutes for the negative.
(Applause.)

HARRY WATON:

MADAM CHAIRMAN AND COMRADES:

The Russian Revolution is a great historic reality. In nature, extent and effect upon the human race it transcends all other revolutions known in history. It is impossible for us, standing so near this colossal event adequately to appreciate its historic significance. It seems to be a universal law of Nature that any of her manifestations on a grand scale can be perceived and appreciated only from a great distance. For instance, the report of a volcanic eruption, though distinctly heard by persons standing hundreds of miles away from the volcano, is hardly heard by persons standing near it. The Russian revolution is an event of so great a nature, and in its consequences will be so fundamental and far-reaching, that it will take generations of historians and philosophers clearly to perceive its grand outlines and adequately to appreciate its effect upon the life and the progress of the human race. The Russian revolution is unprecedented in history, and therefore in its consequences it will be unparalleled. With the Russian revolution mankind passed from the state of boyhood and entered into the state of manhood. *But the Russian revolution is Marxism in action!*

Since 1847, when the historic function of the international proletariat found an adequate expression in the "Communist Manifesto," Marxism had become ever more and more a light and guide to the working class of the world. For more than seventy years Marxism had been studied most assiduously, had been subjected to a most rigorous criticism, and had become the cause and centre of the fiercest and most comprehensive intellectual and spiritual struggle of modern times. At last the time came for Marxism to emerge from the realm of thought and to enter into the realm of action, to demonstrate its soundness and feasibility in the crucible of practical experience; and the Russian revolution afforded the opportunity.

When in 1917, the imperialistic war, itself the result of the inherent contradictions of capitalism—the *greatest crisis that the world ever saw*—and this in answer to my opponent's statement that the crises became ever milder and smaller—when the imperialistic war created in Europe a revolutionary situation, which aroused the European proletariat from the nightmare of the war and infused in them a revolutionary spirit, it was inevitable that the revolutionary potentiality should become an actuality; and, as motion is in the direction of least resistance, it was natural that that great, historic, revolutionary potentiality should find reality and actuality first in Russia, the country in which there was at the time the most fundamental and most comprehensive contradiction between the great intellectual and spiritual progress of the nation, and especially the great intellectual and spiritual progress of the Russian proletariat, and the antiquated and barbarous nature of its political institutions—a contradiction that rendered Russian society most unstable and therefore least capable of resisting a great social disturbance. And hence the Russian revolution.

At first the character of the Russian revolution was undetermined. It was not certain whether it would degenerate to a mere bourgeois revolution, (as every bourgeois revolution in the twentieth century must be a degenerate revolution), or it would rise to the height and dignity of a proletarian revolution. But when the Bolsheviki came into power and began to direct the revolution along the lines of Marxism, then the proletarian character of the revolution became definitely established. The historic function of the international proletarian revolution is to expedite, regulate and control the great historic process that transforms mankind from the state of capitalism, through socialism, into the state of communism. The proletarian revolution, though in form appears at first to be limited in scope and nationalistic in purpose, in substance it is universal in scope, international in aim, and tends to become a world revolution. Once the proletarian revolution started it will not cease until it has covered the entire earth, has comprehended the whole human race, and has firmly established the state of communism. (Applause). The Russian revolution is but the first chapter of the great international proletarian revolution; and a most splendid chapter it is indeed.

The ruling powers, reading in the Russian revolution their doom and inevitable annihilation, united in a universal attack upon the revolution. Through their hired Balaams they flooded

the world with lies, falsehoods and criminal misrepresentations about Russia, seeking therewith to poison the mind of the rest of the human race and to arouse their passions against the Russian revolution. They set up gigantic counter-revolutionary plots, and fomented civil war. They instituted formidable invasions upon Russia, and instigated the neighboring bankrupt nations for a Judas' pay to wage a war of extermination against Russia. And to cap it all, they surrounded Russia with an iron blockade, isolating Russia from the rest of the world and cutting off the Russians from the means of life. Thus with fiendish vindictiveness and hellish means they sought to destroy the Russian revolution.

And though the enemies of the Russian revolution were many, rich and powerful, while its friends were few, poor and weak, yet such is the sublime truth, the divine wisdom and marvellous power of Marxism that by its aid it conquered all its enemies and came out of the struggle victorious, triumphant. The Russian revolution was not destroyed, the Bolsheviki were not overthrown, and Marxism was not defeated. On the contrary, the Russian revolution has become more and more a living historic reality, the Bolsheviki have become more firmly intrenched in power, and Marxism, more than ever before, is now battling for the cause of the international proletariat. Nay, more than this, the situations and roles have changed. Only a while ago the Russian revolution feared capitalism, now capitalism fears the Russian revolution. (Applause.)

The capitalist ruling class, having failed to destroy the Russian revolution, having failed to overthrow the Bolsheviki, having failed to discredit Marxism, having failed to rehabilitate capitalism in their own countries, having failed to remove the cause that constantly increases the number of unemployed and constantly foster in the proletariat a spirit of revolution, having failed to safeguard themselves against the impending revolution, they were compelled to conclude peace with the Russian revolution. They called to a peace conference the very Bolsheviki whom they had branded as murderers, bandits and enemies of society, of civilization, of religion, family, property and order. They invited them to the Genoa conference, and to this conference, not the English, not the French, not the Italians, but the Russians came as victors, and carried away the victors' prize. (Applause.) The treaty between Russia and Germany is worth to Russia infinitely more than the Versailles treaty means to the capitalist countries.

And so it came to pass that since the Russian delegation came

to Genoa, the Germans on their side, the Allied Powers on their side, and even the Catholic Church on its side, each party sought to convince the Russian delegation in its favor; and, as Marx says, "him whom we seek to convince we recognize the master of the situation," the world recognizes the Russian proletariat as the master of the situation; and, indeed, the Russian proletariat, as we shall presently see, is the master of the situation.

Such has been the wonderful achievement of the Russian revolution; such is the sublime truth, the divine wisdom and the marvellous power of Marxism! Well may we say now with the Psalmist: "The stone which the builders despised and rejected has become the chief corner-stone." The down-trodden, despised and illiterate proletariat of Russia has become the chief corner-stone of reconstruction!

In the meantime, however, the Russians have undergone a terrible ordeal. The profuse bleeding of the nation and the economic ruin of the country that resulted from the Russian participation in the imperialistic war before the revolution, and the life and death struggle of the Russians since the beginning of the revolution, compelled the Russian leaders to content themselves, and only for the time being, with a less ambitious plan of reconstruction upon a communistic basis than they had at first hoped for. This is taken by the upholders of the present order as a fact that proved that socialism failed in Russia, that the Russians partially returned to capitalism, and that this proves that Marxism is fallacious.

Having failed to destroy the Russian revolution by force, they now direct their attack against Marxism, and right they are. Marxism is the light, the guide, the soul, the strength and the power of the proletarian revolution, and the Russian revolution is but the beginning of the proletarian revolution. Without Marxism it would have been impossible. And today we have assembled here to continue that struggle upon an intellectual plane, making Marxism the point of attack and defence.

My opponent framed the issue of the debate, not in the form of a resolution, as he stated to you, but in the form of the following questions: "Is the failure of socialism in Russia, as evinced by the partial return to capitalism, due to the fallacies of Marxian theory?" My opponent answers it in the affirmative; I answer it in the negative.

My opponent sought to impose certain conditions attached

to the phrasing of the subject for debate, but he had never consulted me about those conditions before we came here. He simply gave me the wording as it is, and I accepted it. I am therefore at liberty to construe it as I understand it. And just as lawyers in a similar situation interpose what is called a general denial, I, in taking the negative, deny everything. (Applause.)

At the outset, comrades, I must call your attention to, and I must ask you to bear most distinctly in your mind, the following:

First. The debate concerns itself primarily about Marxism, and only secondarily, if at all, about socialism; that is, the question before us is, whether Marxism is true, sound, feasible, or not; but it is not the question before us, whether socialism is good or bad, workable or not.

I call your attention to this, not because I am shy of the subject of socialism. On the contrary, I should have been only too glad to go into this question. But, because the subject for debate is Marxism, the merits of socialism would be irrelevant.

Second. As the subject for the debate is framed, it involves the assumption of the following three facts: First, that the Russians had the necessary means and the proper opportunity to inaugurate and establish socialism in Russia. Second, that socialism failed in Russia. Third, that there was in Russia a partial return from socialism to capitalism.

My opponent assumes these three facts, and upon them as a premise he builds his conclusion that Marxism therefore proved itself to be a fallacy. I deny these facts. I deny that the Russians had the necessary means and the proper opportunity to inaugurate and successfully to establish socialism in Russia. I deny that socialism failed in Russia. I deny that there was in Russia a partial return from socialism to capitalism. I therefore deny the conclusion that Marxism proved itself to be fallacious.

Third. My opponent seeks to attack Marxism. He seeks to prove that Marxism is fallacious by the actions and the methods pursued by the Bolsheviks in Russia. By the very position that my opponent takes he is compelled to recognize the Bolsheviks as Marxists. For, if he should say they are not Marxists, their actions and methods could not be laid at the door of Marxism. My opponent is therefore compelled to recognize unhesitatingly and absolutely the Bolsheviks as Marxists. Being Marxists, their policy and their actions can be laid at the door of Marxism.

But we know that the socialists were absolutely and most bitterly opposed to the Bolshevik principles, methods, policies and ideas. We know that between the Bolsheviks and the Socialists there was a life and death struggle. We know that the socialists had no share in the direction of the revolution and all that had since been done by the Bolsheviks.

Since my opponent is compelled to recognize the Bolsheviks as Marxists, and since the socialists were opposed to them, he is for the same reason compelled to recognize the socialists as not being Marxists, and their doctrines and ideas therefore can have absolutely no bearing upon Marxism.

I do not want to say that among the socialists there are no Marxists. I do not want to say that the socialists have not produced Marxists. But for the purposes of the subject for debate before us, and springing, as it does, from the very nature of the position which my opponent takes, he cannot consider the socialists and the Bolsheviks on the same level. Either the Bolsheviks are Marxists or the socialists are Marxists. But, since he accepted the Bolsheviks as Marxists, he must rule the socialists out of court, and disregard their judgment and opinion.

Therefore, when my opponent went to the Italian commission, the socialist commission, when he went to Bernstein, Tugan Bogdanovsky, and the others, he had no right to do it, because the opinion of socialists has absolutely no bearing on Marxism in questions in which Russia and the Bolsheviks are concerned. Therefore, I rule all these out of court, as being irrelevant, immaterial and incompetent, and I shall never advert a single word to any of the references made by my opponent to the socialists.

We are dealing here only with Marxism. Now then, let us examine the facts upon which my opponent built his whole theory. My opponent assumes that the Russians had the necessary means and the proper opportunity to inaugurate and establish socialism in Russia. He insisted that since the war stopped in 1918, they should have had all the opportunities and the means to inaugurate and establish socialism.

We are not foreigners to Russia, and we know something about the Russian revolution and the conditions under which it was carried out. I ask, what warrant did my opponent have to make the assumption that the Russians had the necessary means and the proper opportunity to inaugurate and establish socialism in Russia? And, if my opponent cannot demonstrate this, as I

shall presently tell you he must, then it is entirely absurd to speak of a failure of socialism in Russia. In other words, if the Russians did not have ample means and the proper opportunity to inaugurate and establish socialism in Russia, and it is even more absurd to lay that failure of socialism in Russia at the door of Marxism. Now, let us see the facts.

Before the Russian revolution broke out the Russians had gone through a most terrible ordeal. About eight million Russians had been killed and crippled in the imperialistic war before the revolution. All industry had been paralyzed and was almost at a standstill. All means of life had almost entirely been consumed, wasted and destroyed. The granary of Russia, Ukrainia, was in the hands of the Germans, and Siberia was then in the hands of outside powers. Under these conditions the Russians were drawn into a revolutionary struggle. Then they had to take up the struggle anew against an enemy more formidable than the Central Powers were. Since the outbreak of the revolution the Russians were compelled to abandon all constructive work and concentrate all their efforts, means and time to a life and death struggle with their enemies. During all this time the Russians had not a single day of peace nor a moment of rest. They therefore did not have the means and the opportunity to inaugurate and establish socialism; they had neither the means nor the opportunity to do any reconstructive work upon any basis, capitalistic, socialistic or communistic.

The Russians were in a position like that of a man who, after he had fought fiercely against beasts and had with great effort succeeded to reclaim a piece of land, and just as he is about to begin to cultivate the land and to build a home for himself, a gang of bandits armed with deadly weapons were to attack him from all sides with the intention of killing him and taking away from him the land. And while he is fighting with the bandits for his life, someone from a distance were to jeer at him that he failed to cultivate the land and build the house, and failed to establish himself. Is it not preposterous, to say the least, to expect the Russians to have succeeded to implant socialism in Russia under such conditions? Did they have the opportunity? If not, what sense is there in speaking of the failure of socialism in Russia?

But, if my opponent means to say that notwithstanding all this the Russians could establish successfully socialism in Russia, that their failure is attributable, not to the war, not to the

struggle of the revolution, but to some inherent fallacy in the policy and methods they pursued, in other words, to the fallacies of Marxism, then my opponent is treading upon most dangerous ground.

My opponent must admit that it was infinitely harder for the Russians under those conditions successfully to erect a new order upon the ruins of an old order than it was for the Allied Powers to rehabilitate capitalism in their own countries. Now, what do we find? Not to speak of the small countries that are so hopelessly ruined that they actually live on charity; not to speak of Austria and Germany, the conquered countries; but what about Italy, France and England? These are the victorious countries. These emerged triumphant. These countries received from us billions of dollars and ammunitions worth billions of dollars. These countries had exacted from the Germans tribute in the billions. Surely, if there was some strength and life in capitalism, the Allied Powers should have been able to rehabilitate capitalism in their countries. They had no war since then, no revolution, no change of order, and things were in a normal state. What do we find?

We find that the condition in Italy, France and England is so desperate, so hopeless, that the ruling powers were compelled to call a peace conference, to invite, not only the Austrians and the Germans, but also the Russians, and Lloyd George in Parliament appealed to his confrères to sanction the Genoa conference because, as he said, the people of England demand it, Europe needs it, and the world cries for it.

Yes, the capitalist world cried for a peace conference with the Russians. Why? Because, a paragraph later, Lloyd George tells them: The unemployment increases in England; and if you do not like the Genoa conference, you will pretty soon see the beginning of something which you will hate even more, namely, revolution.

In this situation, being unable to rehabilitate capitalism, and in their face staring the revolution that may destroy them all, they were compelled to come to the Russians and together to work out a plan whereby they may save themselves. Let us pause to reflect on the situation.

The Russian Soviet Republic is a communist soviet republic. It was built by communists, in the spirit of communism, upon communist principles, and with the purpose of establishing com-

munism, not only in Russia, but all over the world. The ruling class, to save themselves from political destruction, and the capitalist class, to save themselves from economic ruin, were compelled to go to the Russians and to enter with the communist Soviet Republic into political and economic relations.

Now, the ruling powers cannot enter with the Russian Soviet Republic into political relations; they cannot confirm the Russian communists in power; they cannot accord recognition to the communist principles, without making the idea of a communist soviet republic very popular in the world, and without throwing seeds that would soon gain deep root in the consciousness of the proletariat. And the capitalist class cannot enter with the communist Soviet Republic into economic relations, without sanctioning communist principles, without recognizing that communism is here to stay, without spreading among the proletarians of their own countries a knowledge of communism, and without arousing in them a desire for communism, and finally a determination to have communism even in their own capitalist countries.

The ruling powers and the capitalist class knew all this all along. That was why they bent all their efforts to destroy the communist Soviet Republic, because they knew that the communist Soviet Republic was a mortal enemy to capitalism.

Now, the Russian communists, to help themselves in the present difficulties, are compelled to make concessions to capitalism, to enter with the capitalists into political and economic relations. The capitalists, to save themselves from absolute ruin and destruction, are compelled to make concessions to the communist Soviet Republic of Russia. Hence, while on the one hand we see on the part of the Russians a partial return to capitalism, on the other hand we see on the part of the capitalists a step towards communism. If my opponent contends that a partial return by the communists to capitalism means that Marxism has proved itself fallacious, then with greater reason I contend that the partial advance by the capitalist towards communism proves that the doctrines sustaining capitalism are antiquated, worse than useless and amount to nothing.

The capitalist countries are compelled to go to the communists for help, because they suffer from a pernicious anaemia. They must go to the communists for a transfusion of blood, to transfuse into their capitalist system communist blood. But it is all in vain.

Comrades, communism is the most poisonous, mortal enemy to capitalism. The capitalist system cannot imbibe communist blood, without embodying the poison that will annihilate it. So hopeless is the state of capitalism that even for a momentary respite, for a possible help, the capitalists are compelled to go and conclude a compromise with communism. But, by concluding a compromise with communism, they conclude a compromise with the rising order that will annihilate the old order. And that capitalism is in this desperate strait is shown by the following facts:

On the one hand, the inherent contradictions of capitalism, predicted by Marx, demonstrated by Marx, brought about, not merely a petty crisis in some industry, but a universal crisis, which crisis compelled the nations to plunge into a world war, a universal slaughter, to destroy one another, to destroy property, family, religion, civilization, and everything that has been accumulated by the human race for thousands of years. On the other hand, capitalism is now compelled to conclude peace with communism.

While the capitalist class is in this state and capitalism in this perilous situation, I leave it to my opponent to show us how the capitalist class and capitalism can help themselves out of the situation, without the co-operation of Russia. If he can show something, let him show this. *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!*

That the capitalist class and capitalism cannot help themselves without the co-operation of Russia is due to the fact, springing from Marx's theory of value and surplus-value, that the capitalist countries produce the necessities of life, not for use, but for profit; that capitalism may live, it must dispose of its surplus produce at a profit. This it cannot do in the capitalist countries. Capitalism therefore is compelled to gain ever more and more foreign markets where it can dispose at a profit of its surplus produce. Should the foreign markets be cut away from the capitalist countries, not only will the capitalists not receive their profits, but also they will not be able to employ the proletariat of their own countries. In that event, the proletariat will be compelled to rise against the capitalist system and destroy it. At present the only foreign market yet open to the capitalists is Russia. With the co-operation of Russia the capitalists may yet succeed to prolong for some time their rule and sway over the proletariat. Hence, the capitalists are bound to deny their God, repudiate their Religion, scoff at their principles, overthrow their

doctrines, and come to the Bolsheviki and ask them to help them out.

But communist Russia does not produce the necessaries of life for profit: it produces these necessaries for use. They do not need foreign markets. They therefore can get along very well without the co-operation of the capitalist countries. It is true the Russians are now in a deplorable state, due to all the calamities that overwhelmed them, including even that of God and Nature, the famine. But, being in possession of one-sixth of the world, with infinite resources, with infinite storehouse of human energy, it may be only a question of five, ten or twenty years, and they will emerge from their difficulty, owners of one-sixth of the earth and producers of all things for human enjoyment.

That is why the Russian delegation can go away from the Genoa conference, without concluding any treaty with the Allied Powers, and not be the worse off. But let Mr. Lloyd George and the capitalist countries dare go away from the Genoa conference without concluding peace with Russia, and the revolution will overwhelm them in the very near future.

Since capitalism is so hopeless that it is compelled to make such concessions, how does it lie in the mouth of my opponent to speak impliedly of capitalism, as if it were God-ordained, approved by God, Nature and Man, when in the face of all this overwhelming situation, the capitalist world cries for peace with Russia? How can my opponent maintain that capitalism is sound?

Now, while I leave to my opponent the ungrateful task of showing how to galvanize the dead corpse of capitalism, I shall betake myself to the grateful task of showing that socialism never failed in Russia, but is there most prosperous.

If my opponent had read the works of Marx attentively, and had not acquired his knowledge of Marxism second hand, from the Bernsteins and others, then my opponent would know, *and I demand of him that he should know, that Marxism never aimed at socialism, but at communism. Marx was a communist.* All his works are but one continuous argument in favor of communism, and his whole lifetime he devoted to the cause of communism.

Marxism teaches that all social evolution tends irresistibly towards the state of communism. But, though all social evolution

tends towards the state of communism, neither the material conditions of existence nor the human habits as they now are, are fit for the state of communism. The material conditions of existence and human habits must first be prepared for the state of communism. The historic task to prepare both the material conditions of existence and human habits is the task of the international proletariat. The reason for this I shall tell you later on.

Now, the international proletariat cannot begin this process of transformation out of air, out of conditions and materials that will exist in the future. It must start with conditions and materials that it finds on hand right now, and these are capitalistic in nature. In other words, the international proletariat must begin upon a capitalistic basis, with capitalistic conditions of existence and human habits, to build the state of communism. And in doing this the international proletariat will co-operate with the great historic process that transforms society from capitalism into communism.

My opponent told you that Marx believed in the economic interpretation of history. Now, I read a book of my opponent in which he tells us that he more or less agrees with Marx, and he told us the same thing now. But I must tell you that my opponent never understood Marx's interpretation of history, and I challenge him to prove that he did understand it. He has my book, "The Philosophy of Marx." Let him read it carefully and see whether he has ever learned that *Marx was the only man known to history that fought against the crude economic interpretation of history* that had been in vogue since the days of Moses. I could quote the prophets and the old philosophers showing that the crude materialistic interpretation of history had been known before Marx, and that Marx fought all his lifetime against that materialistic interpretation.

Marx taught that between Man and Nature there is a material interaction, but that *it is "man that starts, regulates and controls" that material interaction.* Man is the active, conscious, controlling factor in the making of human history; Nature is but the passive element and condition in that history. But men cannot create a world while they are making their history. They must take the world as they find it and must change it. Therefore, *men must regulate and control the historic process of the world, and by changing the world they also change themselves.* That is why Marx said: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it out of the whole cloth; they do not make it out

of conditions chosen by themselves, but out of such as they find close at hand, given and transmitted." And since the proletariat is the only class in society that has a vital interest in changing the material conditions of existence and human habits, the proletariat must take the regulating and controlling part in this great historic process.

This the proletariat can perform by raising itself to the position of the ruling class and by establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. And here I challenge my opponent to find a single expression in all the works of Marx in favor of liberty. Marx never believed in the bourgeois liberty. He believed in the iron rule of the proletariat, and in the first instance also in the iron rule over the proletariat. That is Marxism. The proletariat must establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, use its political supremacy and the dictatorship of the proletariat to wrest by degrees all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all means of life in the hands of the working class, to increase the efficiency of production, and, finally, to direct all social evolution towards the state of communism.

But that may take some time. It may take perhaps a century, perhaps even more. What will happen in the meantime? In the meantime we shall have a hybrid state composed of capitalism and communism. The foundation and basis are capitalistic, and upon that basis, under the given conditions and with the given materials the proletariat will begin to build the state of communism. That will be a hybrid state, and that state is called socialism. Socialism therefore is capitalism mixed with communism. (Laughter.)

When we watch the transition from night to day, we find that due to the fact that the earth is spherical and revolves on its axis very slowly, once in twenty-four hours, the light of the sun cannot instantaneously remove the darkness of the night, and a period of an hour or more is required for that transition. That period is neither night nor day. It is dawn, a mixture of night and day. Socialism is the dawn between the night of capitalism and the day of communism.

Socialism means organized dictatorial power of the proletariat. It means the very ownership by the proletariat as an organized power of the land, the natural resources, the great industries, and the like. And this, comrades, we have in Russia. Socialism does not seek to establish equality. On the contrary, Marx in his "Criticism of the Gotha Programm" condemns that.

Under socialism there cannot be that equality or freedom which can happen only in a state of communism that is raised upon its own foundation. Until then we shall have capitalistic justice, the law of equivalents, the law of value, capitalistic self-consciousness, money, and ownership of things for personal consumption, until the material conditions and human habit have been adequately prepared for communism. When communism rises on its own foundation, then a new principle of human existence will regulate and determine all social relations: *"From every one according to his faculties, unto every one according to his needs."*

Now, then, since my opponent himself asserts, in the words of the issue of the debate, that the Russians only partially returned to capitalism, he impliedly asserts that besides capitalism there exists some other state. Since we know that the Bolsheviki are Communists, and we know that they endeavored to inaugurate and establish in Russia communism; we have in Russia both the state of capitalism and the state of communism. In other words, we have in Russia socialism.

Now, whether it is good or bad is not the question. When our Americans fought in their revolutionary war against England, they at that stage of the game were no better off than the Russians now are, and their revolution was but child's play in comparison with the gigantic revolution in Russia.

Therefore, my friends, socialism exists in Russia. Since socialism did not fail in Russia, the whole theory of my opponent falls to the ground, and the conclusion which he arrives at is entirely inadmissible. In other words, my opponent failed to prove that Marxism is fallacious.

If I were concerned only with this debate, I could well afford to rest right here. I would not care to go into other discussions. This is not the occasion for me to discuss failures. I am concerned about Marxism, and so are you. Whether you are satisfied with my position or not is immaterial; what is material is that my opponent did not make good his position. And since we are all concerned about Marxism, we must go a step further and consider the matter with reference to Marxism.

The Bolsheviki in Russia in the year 1917 and 1918 made a tremendous step towards communism. Since then they made a backward step. They now content themselves with a position nearer towards capitalism. Does not that prove that

the plan which they had in mind was not workable? Does not that prove that the underlying theory of Marxism was fallacious?

Therefore, though I am not called upon to do so, I will go into the matter a little further, because I want to convey to you the message of Marxism that, on the one hand, you may perceive that there is in Marxism more than hundreds of thousands of my opponents could tell you, and, on the other hand, that you may understand why Marxism spreads so rapidly among the international proletariat, and why in its hands it is such a divine power.

If my opponent read attentively the works of Marx, he ought to know that Marxism contemplates the state of communism, not as a state of a country or of a nation, but as a state of society, as a state of the whole human race. Nothing further from Marxism can be conceived or imagined than the idea that communism could be successfully established in one country, while all other countries remained capitalistic and hostile to it.

(The Chairman here notified the speaker that he had three minutes in which to conclude.)

When a fellow gets into the depths of Marxism he loses all idea of time.

Marxism most emphatically teaches that communism can be successfully established only upon an international basis. That is why Marxism always appealed to the international proletariat to rise in a world revolution against the whole capitalistic system. That was why the Bolsheviki appealed to the international proletariat to help make the Russian revolution a world revolution. That was why the Bolsheviki repeated thousands of times that, unless the international proletariat rose to help make the Russian revolution a world revolution, they would not be able to establish communism, not even in Russia. This fact was so universally known that in every instance in which the Bolsheviki came into contact with the Allied Powers the first condition demanded of the Bolsheviki was that they abandon the idea of the international revolution.

How, with the idea of attacking Marxism can one speak of a failure of communism in Russia, when Marxism teaches

that, unless it be established on an international basis, it must fail? If this is a confirmation of Marxism, it is therefore not a refutation of Marxism, and Marxism stands vindicated, justified and in every way absolutely established. (Great applause.)

(At this point an announcement was made by The Marx-Engels Institute.)

THE CHAIRMAN :

The debate was getting rather hot and I am glad we have had time to cool off. I now call on Professor Seligman, who has fifteen minutes.

PROF. SELIGMAN :

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN : Let me take up the points in their order. First: My respected antagonist challenged me to quote anything from Marx in favor of liberty. I have in my hands a book entitled "The Philosophy of Marx," by Mr. Waton. On page 196 he quotes from the Communist Manifesto in which Marx outlines the future of society and says at the end :

"When that period arrives we shall have an association in which the *free development* of each is the condition for the *free development* of all." If that is not liberty, I do not understand it. (Applause.)

Secondly: My respected opponent says that Marx does not ask for equality. It is true that I have not brought with me any marked passage of Marx's writings, all of which I beg to say that I read probably before my respected antagonist was born, but I have here a quotation from no mean student of Marx, namely, Mr. Nicholas Lenin. In a work in which he expounded the theory of Marx to his friends in 1918 he quotes at the end of a long passage explaining Marxism and referring to the workers the following :

"The important thing is that they should work *equally*, conscientiously and *be paid alike*."

If that is not equality of work and equality of pay I do not understand equality.

Now, then, Mr. Waton speaks in various passages in his book as he did so eloquently today of the "*sublime victory*" that has been accomplished by communism in Russia.

Let me quote in opposition a few words from the last speech of Lenin. He says :

"We have suffered a defeat, and unless we acknowledge it, we shall do worse."

These are his very words. "If we do not wish to play the role of people who do not see their failure; if we do not care to look straight into the face of danger, we must see that we have suffered defeat."

And again: "We must admit, however, that our first retreat proved inadequate, we must now make a supplementary retreat."

That is my reply to the statement of my respected antagonist as to the wonderful success, of the "*sublime success*" that has been achieved by the modern development. But I have here a few quotations from the leading Socialists and Communists of Russia today to explain why they have failed.

Let us take up first the remark of Mr. Osinsky, the Commissioner of Agriculture, six months ago quoted in this book of Prof. Zagorski formerly of Petrograd, which appeared only last week; "Soviet exploitation is a Utopia."

Let me quote the report of four months ago of the Minsk Executive Soviet Committee: "Collective culture has turned out to be an idle dream."

Let me quote from a statement of Lenin to the effect (I am translating from the French) : "We must now endeavor to develop a national economy based upon the real psychology of the middle peasant whose motives and sentiments we have been unable to change in these three years."

There is the "*sublime success*" that has been achieved! I might go on and speak of the statements of Tschekoff and others, all of them referring to the necessity of re-introducing, one by one, all of the competitive motives that communism thought it might accomplish. If the success was so "*sublime*," why all the steps in retreat?

We come now to the argument of my opponent. That the other countries in coming to the Genoa conference are implicitly adopting communism, or rather, to put it more accurately, that capitalism is on the road to accepting communism. Let me quote from a note of the Soviet Government of March 15th to the Entente government in which Russia accepted the invitation to Genoa and say the following:

"The essential point in the policy of the republic henceforth is the desire to create in Russia conditions that will favor the development of private initiative in the fields of industry, agriculture, transport and commerce." Is that a capitulation of capi-

talism to communism, or is it a capitulation of communism to capitalism? (Applause.)

Finally, when my respected opponent speaks of the sad conditions in this country, in England, in France, etc., I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, whether there isn't a difference between unemployment and cannibalism. Cannibalism is what we have actually come to in Russia today. Not for centuries have there been such conditions. And not only do we find this fierce struggle to support life, but we find the same collapse in all the higher manifestations of the spirit in the struggle of the human soul.

Let me read one or two passages from letters that have come to some of us in the last few months.

Here is a letter from Professor Maximoff of the medical academy in Petrograd: "With every day life becomes more intolerable. People die like flies. If it were not for the hope of escaping I would have committed suicide."

Another great scholar, a man who in former times was honored, writes: "Tired and exhausted after a day spent in searching for food I enter a cold and dark apartment. No water or candle. I go to bed without taking off my clothes, I try to keep warm. One had to go out and sweep the streets and clean the roads of sand. When I see my entomological collections perish from cold I do not feel any more of my hunger, but I run like a mad man to make a fire to warm up and save my laboratory."

What does Mr. Rachmaninoff, your famous representative of Russian intellect, right here in this country say? He says: "Imagine a regime that prohibited by force the publication of books or magazines or any outlet for the theories and very arts and fictions and drama that surge in so many American minds. Imagine a condition which made of the creation of new music or wondrous paintings an effort not only to be derided and ridiculed, but a crime as well."

Finally, what does he tell us about the labor that is imposed upon intellectuals in Russia? "Hard work will never hurt anyone." But when a violinist, a doctor of philosophy, a poet, or a great portrait painter, whose hands have been made for honorable effort, in honorable profession, is forced, for no reason under the sun than the mad whim of temporary rulers, to the bench, plow, mop and the hoe, there is danger that the brave spirits within

these artists may droop with discouragement and their messages die unspoken for the delight of posterity.

Ladies and Gentlemen: The conditions may be bad in Poland, France, Austria and even the United States, but nothing remotely resembling the unspeakable conditions which are barely hinted at in what I have read you and which could be duplicated many times over by letters that I have received from eminent thinkers and scientists in Russia. There and there only everything that we call civilization is slowing, crumbling and disappearing.

This is the land of "*sublime accomplishment.*" This is the land which one by one is giving up all the theories of Marx upon which Lenin and Trotzky started out. This is the land which, if not soon saved by the rest of Europe, as it was partly saved from the horror of the famine by the United States a few months ago, this is the land which will afford to us an evidence not of the victorious theories of Marxism, but an evidence of the depths to which fatalistic idealism will bring a great and devoted and promising nation.

Ladies and Gentlemen: In closing I will say that in my antagonist's reply he must show what he has not shown, that socialism or communism, call it what you will, has succeeded, whereas by the statement by Lenin himself it had thus far failed. Failed, as he says, "In the hope that, although we are standing on a precipice and do not know the result, we shall hope that we shall vanquish." *What my antagonist must deal with is not hopes but accomplishments.* (Applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN :

Mr. Waton will now address you for twenty minutes.

HARRY WATON :

Comrades, I must be brief. First, as to liberty. My opponent quoted from the "Communist Manifesto," which I quoted in my "Philosophy of Marx," the following: "In the place of the old bourgeois society with its class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the *free development* of each is the condition for the *free development* of all."

If you turn to the chapter on Coöperation, in the first volume of Capital, there Marx says: When one systematically coöperates with his fellow beings, he strips off the fetters of his individuality and attains to the capacity of his race. In other words, only through coöperation, only through the denial of that liberty which the capitalist class insists upon is it possible for a man to strip off the fetters of individualism and attain to the capacity of the race.

That is what Marx means. The free development, not liberty. The free development of each will be the condition to the free development of all. Development and liberty are two different things. I, for instance, want to become a writer, a speaker or a musician. I can attain to that on condition that I subject myself to the laws, conditions and the requirements of the arts, the sciences and the philosophies, and the like, to be able to write, to speak and to create as the sciences require and the arts dictate.

But that does not mean liberty. It means free development. Likewise, when we want to bring out the social powers for production, we must subordinate all individuals to one centralized plan, and then can we bring out the development of the individual and of society. But my opponent will search in vain in the writings of Marx for a single word as to liberty. On the contrary, he laughs at liberty. And Lenin, the greatest exponent of Marxism, shows that liberty is nonsense, and in my "Fetishism of Liberty" I showed it is an absurdity.

My opponent in his first address challenged me to prove

that Marx's theory that everything tends towards the concentration of capital in fewer and fewer hands is true. I leave it to you, comrades, to turn to the 32nd chapter of the first volume of *Capital*. I have no time to quote it now. Read it.

If you will find a single word about the concentration of capital—and I challenge my opponent to demonstrate it, to prove it—then I will be willing publicly and at my own expense to apologize for making that challenge. Marx speaks of centralization of capital and not of concentration. I leave it to my opponent to go to Marx and find out what is the difference between centralization and concentration.

My opponent read letters from professors. Did you ever see professors on the side of the proletariat? The Russian professors would have drowned the Russian revolution in blood. He must quote to me from Bolshevik proletarians that they are dissatisfied. I admit that the professors look upon Russia as Mr. Rachmaninoff, who left his brothers to starve, and came to America to make money.

Lenin is the greatest man for having had the courage to admit that they failed in many directions; for, in his address to the Congress of the Metal Workers only recently, he said: We make no more regress, but on the contrary we now go forward. And we see that a great movement has been started to re-unite the conflicting element in the camp of the proletariat. There is now being forged a united front. The united front, coupled with the Russo-German treaty, will make themselves felt in a few months from now.

Lenin, on purpose, has always talked to the Russians and told them to be frank and truthful, in order to learn. If you consult Lenin's work, "*The Soviets at Work*," written by him a few months after the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, you will find that even then, more than four years ago, Lenin said: "We must engage experts at salaries of even twenty-five thousand dollars a year." And more than four years ago Lenin said that the success of the revolution will depend upon the concessions which we will make to foreign capitalists.

Lenin did not expect communism to be established in a jiffy. He demonstrated that it would have to take at least two generations to do it. But in the meantime we have in Russia socialism. Who has ever pictured Russia in a good state? I would like to know how my opponent would feel if for eight years he were

battered and badgered and starved to death as the Russians were. The Allied Powers wanted to starve Russia. They succeeded. And the Great Almighty came to their assistance and added for good measure the famine.

But, my good comrades, I have something more important. What about the retreat of the Russian Bolsheviki? How far will it go? Here I ask you to permit me to be very quick, because I have to speak a lot.

My opponent as a historian presumes to judge of the great historic process. He ought to have made sure of the nature and method of the course of progress. Did he? We shall presently see.

Progress is a moving forward. It is essentially movement, and all movement is rhythmic, that is forward and backward. The reason for this, as shown by Herbert Spencer, is that every body moving in space meets with resistance, and the resultant therefore can be but a forward and backward movement. A few illustrations will make it clear.

When standing at the sea-shore and observing the coming in of the tide, we notice the following: The sea sends out a wave beyond the low water mark, which waves returns. It sends out another wave beyond the first wave, which second wave returns. It sends out a third wave beyond the second wave, which returns. And so it sends waves forward and backward until it reaches the high water mark.

When we reflect on this, we notice that though the movement of the sea was forward and backward, in the main it was forward.

Likewise, when we reflect on the progress of the seasons, we perceive the same thing. We rise in the morning, go out into the street; the sky is clear, the sun is bright, the atmosphere is warm and we feel glad; spring is here. We feel like taking off our winter clothes and look forward towards bright and warm days. The next day, however, disappoints us: it is cloudy, cold and ends in snow. A few days later we have again bright and warm days, followed by cloudy, cold and rainy days, and again bright and warm days, until we have Spring in all its glory.

Here, again, when we reflect on the course of the season, we perceive that, though its movements were forward and backward, in the main they were forward. This is the universal characteristic of progress.

If time permitted it would be most illuminating to make an excursion through astronomic, geologic, psychologic and sociologic phenomena and perceive that throughout all the infinite manifestations of existence this is the course of progress. But I must limit myself to a hasty survey of human progress. When we contemplate human progress both from the point of the achievements and from the point of the means of progress, namely, the human race, we find that all human progress was rhythmic, a forward and backward movement. When we contemplate from the point of the achievements, we find that after periods of great religious exaltation and creative work came periods of religious depression and indifference. After great political progress came political regress. After periods of renaissance in the arts, the sciences, the industries and the philosophies came periods of indifference, stagnation, degeneration and decay, followed again by periods of exaltation, progress and regeneration, and so on indefinitely.

Again, when we contemplate the course of progress of the human race itself, here we perceive a most wonderful truth which has escaped, not only the scientists, but also the socialists of the world. Here we perceive a most remarkable thing. As the sea, life sent out a wave of progress through the Chinese and other ancient nations, and that wave returned. Life then sent out another wave of progress through the Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Hindus, then below the Chinese in progress, which wave went beyond the first wave and returned. It then sent out a third wave of progress through the Jews, the Greeks and the Romans, then below the Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Hindus, which wave went beyond that of the latter and returned. Life then sent out another wave of progress through the Teutons, the Saxons, the Normans and the Franks, then below the Jews, the Greeks and the Romans in progress, which went beyond the preceding wave and returned. The same was followed in the case of the Arabs, the Turks, and also in the modern renaissance. And now life sends out a wave of progress through the Russians, that are below the Teutons, the Saxons, the Normans and the Franks, but this wave will go beyond all preceding waves of progress, and it, too, will return, to be followed by still higher waves of progress in other nations, and so *ad infinitum*.

Now, when we contemplate the course of human progress, we perceive that, though its movements were forward and backward, in the main they constituted one grand epic of human progress. The course of progress always started a new wave

through an element below the one that served as the previous medium of progress and moved further. Here we find a new truth, brought to light by Hegel and Spencer, that every step in progress becomes a hindrance to further progress. My opponent, like most socialists, asked the question: Why did not the revolution break out in England? Here he finds the answer, because the English had made previous progress, which became a hindrance to their further progress, and life therefore will use a medium for progress such as offers least resistance, such as is not blocked by previous progress. This is a truth we find throughout all history.

And now we shall be able to understand the course of the Russian revolution. But, before we come to the Russian revolution, let me give you a brief sketch of an analogous revolution, namely, the bourgeois revolution in France. Prior to 1789 France was feudalistic and monarchic. A crisis precipitated the revolution. The first revolutionary wave brought the Constitutionals to the fore. The second wave brought the Girondins to the fore. The third wave brought the Jacobins to the fore. In 1793 the revolutionary waves reached the highest crest. Great political and economic changes were inaugurated. But, as France did not receive fresh revolutionary streams from other countries, the revolution began to subside. And then the process is reversed. The Jacobins are overthrown, then the Girondins, then the Constitutionals, and Napoleon takes their place. In 1815 even Napoleon is overthrown, the Bourbons are restored, the monarchy is reestablished, and reaction is settled down, and it seems as if the revolution is dead. But it is not dead. In 1830 it sends out a new wave which overthrows the landed aristocracy and brings to the fore the finance aristocracy, and inaugurates some political changes. In 1848 another revolutionary wave overthrows the finance aristocracy, brings to the fore the industrial capitalist, inaugurates some political changes and establishes the republic. Here, again, the revolutionary tide of Europe failing, the revolution in France begins to subside. Louis Bonaparte destroys the republic, establishes again the monarchy, reaction sets in, and it seems that the revolution is again dead. But it is not dead. In 1870 it sends out another revolutionary wave which overthrows the monarchy, reestablishes the republic, the most proper form of government for capitalism, clears the ground for the capitalist class and the historic task of the revolution is accomplished.

When we contemplate the course of the bourgeois revolution

in France, we find that, though its movements were forward and backward, in the main they were forward. The revolution accomplished its historic purpose. It destroyed monarchy and feudalism, annihilated the feudal aristocracy and nobility, cleared the ground for capitalism, and established the capitalist class in power. And the course of the bourgeois revolution in France was only typical of its course in all other capitalist countries. And now we shall be able to understand the Russian revolution.

We shall not go far into ancient history, but come straight to the Russian revolution. When the revolution broke out, the first revolutionary wave brought to the fore the Lvovs and the Miljukoffs, constitutionalists. The next wave brought to the fore Kerensky and the Mensheviks, more revolutionary. The third revolutionary wave brought to the fore Lenin and the Bolsheviks, the most revolutionary. Great political and economic revolutions are effected and fundamental changes are inaugurated. But here, as in France, as no new revolutionary streams come from Europe, the revolution in Russia began to subside. The Bolsheviks were then confronted with this alternative: either to pursue the forward course towards communism and like the Jacobins in France, to be guillotined, or to yield to the logic of events and, as Lenin said, to hold on to that link which the chain of progress presents each day. Fortunately for the cause of the international proletariat, the Bolsheviks learned from Marx to retreat a step in order to be able to make a new advance. This was foreseen by Lenin even in the days of the height of the revolution, as can be seen from his "Soviets at Work," written by him only a few months after he came into power. Then he said, this is the time to pause, to retrench ourselves, to come nearer to the base of operation and to begin to make preparations for further progress.

Hence, the partial return to capitalism. This was in perfect accord with the eternal and universal law of progress, and a conformity with the eternal and universal law of progress is not a failure, is rather a success. The fact, that the Russians are still suffering, proves nothing. I might take a plot of land, plow it through and sow seeds in it. A fool, standing nearby, might laugh at me for taking good seeds and throwing them into the ground, there to be lost and destroyed, while I might rather have eaten the seeds now and satisfied my hunger and enjoyed. But, what the fool does not know, I know. I know that the seeds will neither be lost nor be destroyed. But, on the contrary, that as soon as I throw the seeds into the ground, Mother Nature takes them up, bathes them in the rain, warms them in the sunshine,

feeds them from her breast on her infinite energy, and day and night with infinite care watches them, and so for a period of three months; when, lo and behold, there from the seeds sprouted out and grew up strong and beautiful plants, yielding in return seeds a hundredfold, a thousandfold. It is true that I am now hungry and would enjoy the seeds now; but I know that, unless I suffered now and patiently bided my time and made the best of the circumstances and prepared for the future. I would be even in greater peril of losing my life in the future. Unless I sow the seeds in the Spring, I shall starve to death in the Fall. This is the law of existence, and in accordance with this law the Russians have been sowing the seeds for the last five years, to reap a rich harvest in the future.

Can my opponent rationally, intelligently and humanly expect that the Russian revolution, the greatest revolution on earth, covering one-sixth of the earth's surface, that has been in existence only five years, that this revolution should already have been prosperous now? Why, comrades, it would have been preposterous; it would be absurd; it would be impossible. It would mean a miracle more than God himself could do.

There is a Jewish saying which, as a Jew I appreciate very much, and which I want to tell you in conclusion: "Don't show to fools uncompleted work."

(The applause at this point was very great and continued to increase, whereupon Mr. Waton rose and asked the audience to join him in three cheers for the Russian Soviet Republic. The cheers were deafening.)

PROFESSOR SELIGMAN:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

First, as to a very minor point, the point of *concentration versus centralization*. I quote again from a very remarkable work, "The Philosophy of Marx," by Mr. Waton. In the middle of page 255 he objects to the present system because "it excludes the *concentration* of the means of production." On page 256 you will find, "the transformation of the individualized and scattered means of production into socially *concentrated* ones." And at the bottom of the page and continuing to the next we find: "This expropriation is accomplished by the imminent laws of capitalist production itself, by the centralization of capital; that is, not by the concentration of capital into the hands of capitalists, but by the centralization, organization and coöperation of capital. The capitalist whose capital has been consolidated and centralized . . ." On page 259: "Centralization and not merely concentration." That means concentration as well as centralization.

Let us stop all these absurd disputes which add nothing anyway to the discussion. Let us come to the next point. My opponent poured out his wrath upon the professors and intellectuals who have always been against progress. Was Marx an intellectual or not? (Interjected by Mr. Waton: "Yes, an intellectual but not a professor.") Were about half of the great socialists that Russia has known professors or not?

In fact the whole intellectual armory of socialism and communism comes from the thinkers and the professors.

Moreover, my objection to communism is not simply that it calls intellectualism a joke and kills the intellect, but that is also kills the workingmen.

My opponent asks whether any Bolsheviks have objected. If there were time I should like to read to you the protest from the trade unions, from the workingmen in the various parts of Russia protesting against the way in which the strikes were ruthlessly suppressed; protesting against the way the strike leaders were executed; protesting the way they are compelled to work eighteen hours in some of the factories. All of this I could quote to you if there were time.

The real objection to communism is indeed, as my opponent has intimated, that it kills individualism, and in killing individualism it kills art as well as science. Art is nothing if not the expression of the individual. The efforts that are being made now by the Art Commissar to force into art those fictitious acceptances of communism are killing art just as they are killing science.

Mr. Lenin, in the speech which I hold in my hand, says there are three things we must guard against. "The three principal enemies which we have to face are *communistic arrogance, illiteracy and barbarity.*"

How does he define communistic arrogance? "Communistic arrogance means that a man who is a member of the communist party and has not yet been cleaned out, imagines that he can solve all his tasks by communist phrase-making."

I don't wish to be impolite because my antagonist has sedulously observed the better conventions of a debate, but I would appeal to you that, after all, this battle can never be fought out by mere phrase-making.

You have got to face the facts. The facts are that one by one Lenin and the rest are going back surely but slowly in substance and even in form to all the positions which they opposed a few years ago.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I submit that my antagonist has not met me on those fundamental points. He has not controverted a single one of the facts which show that Russia today is becoming, on the one hand, a huge chaos, and on the other hand, the greatest example of forcible suppression on the part of every one who is not a member of the tiny group that is running the country. He has not sought to controvert my argument as to the inadequacy of the specific Marxian theories of surplus value, of concentration or centralization of capital, of pauperism and of the cataclysm of society, and he has not been able to explain how a return to capitalism means a return to socialism. In all these points he has failed to make good.

In conclusion, the reason why international communism is going to pieces today in this country as well as in other countries, and why only a fraction of the socialists outside of Russia are adherents of the communist idea, is, as I take it, twofold; first and foremost, the communists in Russia are not willing to admit that *real progress comes not through revolution but through evolution.* If there is any soundness in socialism at all it is on the

side of those who preach socialism through evolution rather than socialism through revolution.

Although I, of course, concede revolution has had its place in our own American republic and elsewhere, it can only succeed as it did then, when the inner forces are in harmony with the outer forms. When this is not the case it is bound to be a failure. As a consequence the whole labor reform and social reform movement in every country outside of Russia is making progress through evolution and not through revolution.

But there is a second reason why Marxism will in the end never succeed. Marx objected to the sentimental socialist. He objected to anything that emphasizes the spiritual side of mankind.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I also believe in reform. I am like many or all of you, by no means satisfied with the social conditions of today, but the social reform that I believe in is a gradual, a sound, pervasive reform, a reform so replete with harmony between the inner and the outer phases that it will be at once abiding and far-reaching.

It is only in this way, ladies and gentlemen, that you ever effect a reconciliation with justice and liberty, the liberty which we are told in Russia every one derides today. It is only in this way that we shall be able to affuse the creative and the acquisitive spirit; it is only in this way that we shall be able to lay the foundations of social production so broad and so firm and so enduring that on them it will be possible to erect the future temple of social peace with its wide and glorious wave of equal opportunity and its slim and lofty spire of ideal fulfilment—cleave the clouds of antagonism rising above the mists of prejudice, distrust and soaring into the deep and eternal blue of infinite achievement and unending progress. (Applause.)

LITERATURE

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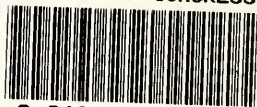
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